

THE  
VANITIE  
OF  
MAN,  
IN  
His best ESTATE;  
A  
SERMON

PREACHED  
At St. *MARIES* in Nottingham,  
March 18. 1657.

At the Funeral of the Honourable *FRANCIS*  
*PIEREPONT*, Esq, third Son to the Right  
Honourable *ROBERT* late Earl of  
KINGSTON.

By *WILLIAM REYNOLDS*, M.A. Mi-  
nister of the Gospel at St. *Maries* in Nottingham.

*The voyce said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass,  
and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.  
The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the  
Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. Iſai. 40. 6, 7.*

LONDON,

Printed for J. Rothwel, at the Fountain in Goldsmiths-  
row in Cheapside, 1658.

W. Musgrave.



At the request of the Honorable Members of the House of Commons, the following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the office of Secretary of the British Museum, since the year 1800, to the present time.

By WILLIAM REYNOLDS, M.A. Librarian of the British Museum.

1800. Mr. Thomas Munro, Secretary of the British Museum, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

1801. Mr. Thomas Munro, Secretary of the British Museum, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

1802. Mr. Thomas Munro, Secretary of the British Museum, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

To the Honourable *Alissimus Pierrepont* Wi-  
dow to the late Honourable *Francis*  
*Pierrepont* Esq. deceased.

*Madam,*

**I**T was at your desire that these *Sermons*  
were preached, and it is through your  
continued commanding importuni-  
ty that they appear in publick: our  
backwardnesse hereunto is very well  
known unto you, which yet proceed-  
ed not from any want of respect either to your self,  
or your deceased Husband (whose Memory we do,  
and ever shall honour) but from the sense of our own  
weaknesse and unworthinesse, and an unwilling-  
nesse to renew your grief, fearing lest every review  
of these Sermons, might prove as a fresh tenting of  
that wound, which the loss of so near and dear a re-  
lation hath made in your heart. But our respects both  
to your deceased Husband, and to your self, from  
both whom we have received so many ingaging fa-  
vours, as also your own most earnest desire that these  
Sermons might be printed, have silenced all our Ob-  
jections, and prevailed with us to the publishing of  
them, which we now humbly dedicate unto you,  
knowing none that have a greater right unto them  
than your self, by reason of your most neer relation,  
and dear affection, unto him at whose Funeral they  
were preached.

*Madam,* We are very sensible both of your and our

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great

great loss. The Lord teach and help both you and us, to find and make up that in God, which we have lost in the Creature. The present duty which this dispensation of Providence calls for, is the eying of God in it, a submission unto, and due improvement of it, that you may *hear the Rod, and him that appoints it.*

And if any thing in these plain *Sermons* may further you, or any other in the like condition, to the performance of this duty (which through Gods blessing we hope they may) we shall rejoyce and be thankful unto God.

The former acquaints you with *Mans Vanity in his best Estate*, which lesson God hath been many wayes, and for a long time teaching of you; First, by taking away diverse of your dear Children from you in their tender years, and now your more dear Husband in his *best Estate*, according to the sense of the *Psalmist*. Sure God would by these Providences knock off your Hands and take off your Heart from the Creature. Endeavour to make this use of them, to get a more weaned Heart from the world, and all those Creature-enjoyments God hath yet left you It is true indeed you have cause to say with *Job*, *Have pity upon me, have pity upon me O ye my Friends, for the Hand of the Lord hath touched me.* Yet withall, you have still cause to acknowledge, that in the midst of Wrath, God hath remembered Mercy; in a peaceable settling your worldly affairs, to content and satisfaction, and yet more, in his hitherto sparing and continuing unto you the life of your now onely surviving Daughter *Mrs. Winnifred Pierrepont*, a living Branch of your deceased Husband. Our Prayer is, and shall be, that God would season her young and tender



der Heart with Grace, and that he would lengthen her life, that she may live to be an instrument of his glory, and a comfort unto you and her relations. And our Humble Advice to you, in order hereunto is, That you would take heed lest you set your Heart too much upon her; you cannot love her too well, but you may love her too much: and strong affections towards Creatures, do usually make way for strong afflictions. See therefore that you place not too much of happinesse in her, or any other Creature, but make God your portion, and while you use Creatures of which God hath vouchsafed you plenty, be sure you enjoy God: and labour after an Estate that is better than Mans best Estate, whether *natural, Civil, or Moral.*

The latter Sermon, presents you with the gain and advantage of *Uprightnesse*, and *Sincerity of Heart*, and may serve as a Cordial to Gods People under the greatest present presures of trouble and affliction, which they are exercised with; assuring them of a calm Evening after a stormy Day, and that though they have sorrow here, yet they shall find joy and rest at last, in their Fathers House and Saviours Bosome. We hope God hath given you this *Uprightnesse* of Heart, and pray, that he would give you that peace and comfort which he hath promised to it. Labour more and more to abound in this Grace: See that *Uprightnesse* animate all your performances, Professions, and Practices: Let *Uprightnesse* be your way, and Peace shall be your end. Which that it may be, is the humble and earnest prayer of

*Madam*

*Your Honours most obliged Servants,*

John Whitlock.

William Reynolds.

## ERRATA in First Sermon.

**I**n p. 10. l. 10. for *be* read *being*, in p. 19. l. 15. for *or* read *to*.

In Second Sermon.

In p. 3. l. 3. for *diligent*, read *diligently*, p. 5. l. 25. add *be* before *verme*, p. 12. l. 26. add *so* before *2 Kings*, p. 19. l. 7. add *your* before *f*, p. 19. l. 15. for *this*, read *his*, p. 21. l. 2. for *neither*, read *withier*, p. 23. l. 3. dele *8*, p. 25. l. 24. for *caring*, r. *carving*, p. 25. l. 30. add *called* before *a true heart*, p. 27. l. 32. add *their* before *hearts*, p. 28. l. 6. r. *purifying*, p. 28. l. 28. dele *own*, p. 28. l. 34. add *the* before *doors*, p. 31. l. 10. add *have* before *had*, p. 35. l. 7. for *green*, r. *greecaeis*, p. 35. l. 33. for *incipit*, r. *incipis*, p. 37. l. 14. for *Diabolo*, r. *Diabolo*, p. 38. l. 14. dele *be*, p. 38. l. 22. add *que*, after *proavos*.

In Verses.

Second Copy, p. 2. v. 11. for *brighe*, r. *bright*, *ibid.* v. 30. read *Country*, in fourth Copy in the Latine Verses, v. 13: for *religionis*, r. *relligionis*, in the English Copy, p. 2. v. 21. for *Sepulchrall*, r. *Sepulchrall*. *Ibid.* v. 32. r. *power*, in Mr. Pickering's Copy, v. 13. r. *Elegie*, Mr. Grants Copy, p. 2. v. 10. for *invite*, r. *indites*. C. Cop. v. 18. r. *rhings*, Mr. Stillingfleet Cop. p. 2. v. 25. r. *Brothers*.



To the truly Honoured *ROBERT*  
*PIEREPONT*, Esquire, the  
only Son and Heir; And to *M<sup>rs</sup>. Frances*  
*Pierepont*, Eldest Daughter to the Honourable  
*FRANCIS PIEREPONT*, lately deceased.



**W**E are bold to present you with these two  
**SERMONS** Preached at the late Fu-  
neral of your dear Father, whose Me-  
mory being (as deservedly it ought to  
be) most Highly Honoured by you, We  
doubt not but these *Sermons* devoted thereunto, will  
be very acceptable unto you. The Lord bleſs the  
Reading of them to you both, and grant that the great  
truths held forth in them, may be ſo impreſſed upon  
your hearts, as that being convinced of the former,  
namely, *Mans Vanity even in his beſt Eſtate as to this*  
*world*, you may above all things labour after the later,  
to wit, *Gospel-perfection, and uprightness of heart*;  
by thus doing, you will live moſt honourably, dye  
moſt peaceably, and to all eternity live moſt happily,  
which is the hearty Prayer of

Your Faithful Servants in the  
Work of the Lord.

*John Whitlock,*

*William Reynolds.*

## To the READER.

**T**He unusualness of having two Sermons Preached at the Funeral of one Person, occasions us to Preface somewhat to give thee an account thereof. That person of Honour, at whose Funeral these Sermons were Preached, having had his residence for some years, and dying in the Town of Nottingham, where he was much respected and honoured; and a great part of the persons invited to his Funeral, being inhabitants of the said Town, many of which were unable to attend the Hearse to the place where his body was interred, which was at some considerable distance, and the Church there too small to receive so great a number; It was judged inexpedient, to dismiss so great a Company, as were met at his house at Nottingham, with a meer civil treatment, without some word of instruction suitable to so solemn an occasion; which occasioned the Preaching of the former Sermon. As for the later Sermon, which was only at first intended, we shall need to give no further account than this, that it was Preached at the place where the Corps was interred.

We need no less to apologize for our appearing in Print in this age, wherein the Press abounds with so many supernumerary Papers. It was with much unwillingness that we were induced to it, but the importunity of some friends (nearly related to the Person deceased) to whom we owe very much respect, and our willingness to do any thing, that might contribute to the keeping up the memory of him now dead, whom we so much honoured whilst living, hath at last prevailed with us, thus to appear in publick. You have the Sermons as they were Preached, without any addition, except, that in the later Sermon, divers enlargements which were prepared to be delivered, but through streights of time, were necessarily then omitted, are now added. Such as they are, we recommend them to thy Reading, and to Gods blessing upon them: not doubting, but if God shall teach thee those two main Lessons held forth in them, (viz.) Mans-Vanity, and Heart-Integrity, they may much conduce to thy holy Life, and happy Death. Which that they may, is the Prayer of

Thy Souls Servants,

John Whitlock,

William Reynolds.



## TEXT. *Psalm. 39. 5.*

*Surely, or verily, every Man, at his best Estate, is altogether vanity. Selah.*



**V**E read the Prophet *David*, in the second and third verses of this *Psalm*, e're he breaks forth into that Speech, of which our Text is a part, saying, *that his sorrow was stirred, and that his heart was hot within him.* In like manner before

I speak to my Text, I must needs crave leave to tell you, that upon the sight of this great Assembly, congregated to solemnize the *Funeral Rites* of that truly *Honourable Person* deceased, I find my sorrow stirred, and my heart to be greatly moved within me. It is indeed some weeks since, that divine providence made this sad breach amongst us: but the wound yet is very green, and the least tenting of it, makes it to bleed afresh, how much more such a violent raking into it as at this day! and what are a few weeks, moneths, nay, I may adde years, to wear out those deep impressions, which the loss of a Personage of so much honour and worth hath made upon the minds of many amongst us?

My beloved, It is very well known to the most of you, that it hath neither been mine, nor my fellow-labourers practice, during those seven years, which now within some very few dayes, we have laboured in the word and doctrine among you, either to Preface, or add any *Panegyricks* to the *Funeral Sermons* we have been

He dyed the  
30<sup>th</sup>. of 7<sup>th</sup>.  
month.

The seveneth  
year is com-  
pleat the 25<sup>th</sup>.  
March, 1658.

## The vanity of M A N,

called to Preach; and one great reason of our forbearance hath been the great abuse which we have observed formerly to have been hereof; it having been too usual, as one sadly complains, *ut eorum vita laudentur in terris, quorum anima cruciantur in inferno*; and we have also observed, that there hath been but little of edification in the best, and much of falshood, and flattery, in the most Funeral Commendations.

Yet though we have forborn the practice, we have not judged it unlawful to give a due Testimony to the dead, in mentioning such commendable virtues, and practices, as may be precedential to the Living.

2 Chron. 32.

33.

\* Acts 9. 99.

\* Dr. Spurflow  
in his Sermon  
preached at  
the Funeral  
of the Lady  
Viner.

The warrantableness of it, might be clearly evinced, both from what we read in *Scripture* \*, as also what we find to be practised amongst the *Antients*: who as a \*present Divine in our Nation hath observed, did oftentimes mingle the prayles of their dead friends, with their sorrowful mournings over them. It is not so much the lawfulness, as the expediency of thus doing, which is so much scrupled. The great miscarriage (as the same Author expresseth) which hath brought this way and practice, both under suspicion, and censure, hath been the *Golden commendations* that some have bestowed upon *worth-less Persons*. But I perswade my self, that the eminency of worth and merit, which was so resplendent in that *Honourable Person* whose *Funeral rites* we now solemnize, will cause, that I should rather incurre your *Censure*, by my silencing the due Character that may be given of him, than your *suspicion*, by an unfeigned, and impartial expression of it.

I shall not take upon me, to give you a *Narrative* of his whole life; albeit I might (having the warrant of a very good Testimony, and the witness of some present, to whom the whole of his conversation hath been very well known) safely say this of him, in reference to that part of his life, which was unknown to me; That his youth was no wayes beleapred with those foul spots of pride,

pride, luxury, prodigality, and diſobedience to Parents which are too too Common: but that his *humility, modesty, frugality, and devout obsequiousness to his Noble Parents*, was ſuch as is rarely parallel'd in a Perſon of his Birth and quality. A worthy pattern for young Gentlemens imitation.

But I ſhall paſs theſe things, and divers others I might mention, as the ſpeaking to that Antient and Noble Family, of which he was a Branch, this being better known to many amongſt you, than it can be expreſſed by me. And I have met with what *Baſil* obſerved in the praiſe of *Gordius* the *Martyr*. "It is the Cuſtom of the world (ſaid he) when they would praiſe a man to ſpeak of his Family, to derive his Pedigree through many deſcents, to open unto all his Education, parts, and learning, and ſuch other accompliſhments: *ſed Ecce ſeſia hec tanquam ſupervacua dimittit*; the Church looks only at ſuch things, which may glorifie God in his Saints, and thereby do good to them that remain alive.

The brief Character I ſhall give of him, (for I muſt be brief in all that I have to deliver) ſhall be only in ſuch things, which my perſonal knowledge, and the great honour I do, and ſhall ever bear to his memory, doth both warrant, and provoke me to deliver.

To begin firſt with things relating to Religion, a due regard to which is the moſt radiant, and ſparkling Stone in the whole Ring of any ones virtues: There were theſe ſeveral particulars highly commendable in him.

Fiſt his conſtant attendance upon the publick Ordinances, and that not only on the Lords-day, both Morning and Evening, but alſo on the Week-days at both the Lectures.

Secondly, his conſtant frequenting the Sacrament of the Lords-Supper, in its monethly adminiſtration amongſt us: I may ſafely ſay, that for theſe ſix years



## The vanity of M A N

last past, wherein we of this Congregation have been privileged with the enjoyment of this Ordinance, I do not remember, that when he was in Town, and in perfect health, he ever omitted three *Sacraments*.

Thirdly, his care and cost to set up, and his constant attendance upon the *worship* of God in his *Family*: wherein the *Scripture* was read, and *Prayer* made Morning and Evening.

Fourthly, his not only complying with endeavours after *Reformation*, in the due administration of *Gospel-Ordinances* amongst us; but his *forwardness* unto, and *activity* about the settling of *Order* in the Church of God in this place; of which he was not only an useful, and honourable member, but was pleased also to act as an *officer*, humbly condescending herein, to joyn himself with persons far inferiour to himself, in rank, and quality.

Fifthly, the great respect he bore to the *Ministers*, and *Messengers* of Jesus Christ: Surely he accounted well of them, as the hearty welcome he gave them to his own house, his friendly going to their houses, his constant attendance upon, free, and bountiful encouraging of them in their labours, doth abundantly testify. And that this respect he shewed, was not so much to the persons of the Ministers of the Gospel, but unto the faithful, and conscientious discharge of their *work*, and *office*, that worthy speech of his, which was oft heard uttered by him, bears witness; namely, *That it much pleased him, to hear such searching Sermons, as rip up the heart, and discovered sin to the full.*

And as I have thus glanced at some commendable practices in him relating to *Religion*, so should I speak distinctly to each *moral virtue* that was resplendent in him, I should exceed the limits of the time which is allotted to this part of the Solemnity; I must remember, I am yet to begin my Sermon, and that after it, another, at some distance hence is to be preached: to sum up therefore all in a very few words.

This

This truly Honourable person whom we now commemorate, was most punctually and exactly righteous in all his civil transactions, tenderly mercifull and compassionate towards decayed Debtors and Tenants; humble, affable, and courteous towards all, and grievous to none.

And in the last place, I must not forget his *Charitie* to the *poor*. Indeed by *Will* and *Testament* there is little done, he being surprized with the suddenness of his sickness and death: yet whilst he was living he did some things very exemplary. Besides the constant relief the poor had at his Gate, and his liberal annual pension to a poor Scholar in the *Univerſity*, and to some others that had been in the relation of Servants to himself and *Noble Father*; he did some years before his death settle by *Deed* 12. pound *per Annum* for ever upon the Almshouses founded by *Mr. Hanly*.

These things being so well known, have we not great cause to mourn over the loss we have sustained in and by his death? The *honourable Widdow* hath lost a most tender Husband, the *Orphan'd Children* a loving and indulgent Father, the Servants of the Family a mild, prudent, and most righteous Master, the Tenants a just, and compassionate Land-lord, we Ministers a noble Friend and faithfull Patriot: *We especially, whom God hath called to this place*, who came hither upon his, together with some others of the chief of the Parish, special invitation, set down here (after mutual knowledge obtained one of another) upon the publick declaration of his, and the whole Parishes earnest desire and call of us so to do, and have chearfully and comfortably, and (through grace we hope we can say,) in some measure profitably continued our Ministerial employment, and been succesfully carryed through the many difficulties that usually attend endeavors after Reformation in the administration of Gospel-Ordinances, through his (under God) special countenance, encouragement.

regiment and active concurrence with us: The sense and experience of which mercy from God to us, and choice Service which this great and publick good Man did the Gospel, hath caused many thanksgivings unto God, much heightened the deserved honourable esteem which we with the whole Church of God amongst us had of him, made us highly to prize, and earnestly to pray for his life; and now, we reflecting upon the greatness of our loss, sadly to bewail his death: but I must proceed no farther on this Text; to come to the other.

*Text*

*Surely Every man, at his best estate, is altogether vanity. Selah.*

**W**E may fitly begin our discourse upon this *Text*, with that gracious *Apophthegm* or rather divine *Oracle*, wherewith *Solomon* that Kingly and royal *Preacher* begun his sacred retracts, (so some have styled his book of *Ecclesiastes*) saying, *vanity of vanities; vanity of vanities, all is vanity*. This is an Hebrew Form or Phrase of speech, they expressing the Comparative often by a preposition, and the superlative by doubling the same word, which noteth excellency and perfection: by the ingemination and redoubling of the same word and Phrase, the *Preacher* doth at once both confirm the judgement in the certainty of the fundamental truth he layeth down, and also vehemently move the affections: a good copy for all *Preachers* to write after, namely, to speak such words as may be both instructive and affective. As to the import of this concise speech of *Solomons*, in brief it is this; That all things here below are most vain, or extreme vanity, and that no true felicity can be enjoyed in the freest and largest possession of them. In the fourteenth verse he tells

tells us, that they are not only *vanity*, that is, as our *Annotators* gloss, ineffectual to confer happiness; but which is worse, they are *vexation of Spirit*, apt to bring much affliction and trouble upon the heart of him who is too earnestly conversant about them: And this he delivers as the result of all that his search and enquiry which by *Wisdom*, that is, by his very best skill, he made into the causes and effects of all things, that have a being and are done under the Heaven: *I the Preacher was King over Israel in Jerusalem, and I gave my heart to seek, and to search out by Wisdom, concerning all things that are done under Heaven: and I have seen all the works that are done under the Sun, and behold all is vanity and vexation of Spirit. Ecclesi. 1. 12, 13, 14.*

Thus you have heard what *Solomon* saith; but they are not his words but *David's* which we are now to insist upon: the difference indeed that is between them is but little, what *David* saith in the *Text*, is included in what *Solomon* hath delivered, as each particular is comprehended in the *general*, and each *part* and *parcel* in the *whole*. *Solomon* tells us, that *all the works* that are wrought under the *Sun* are *vanity*, and *David* singles out one of the works, but indeed the chiefest and topmost of all the rest, and instanceth in this, when considered and beheld by us in the completest outward form and natural perfection of it, and he saith that it is altogether *vanity*. Surely every man, in his best estate, is altogether *vanity*. *Selah.*

The *Text* may not be unfitly stiled fallen mans *Portraiture*, and lively image and representation; and this is such a curious and exact peece of workmanship as cannot be paralleld; it far exceeds whatever art in the highest perfection, brought any of its *Scholars* unto; the most exquisite *Limners* that ever we heard or read of, could never give us the draught and portraiture of the Mind and Soul of man in its inward motions and operations;

rations; Some have drawn the Pictures and representations of mens bodies to the life; but they could never so draw any, as in their draught to represent together with the outward form and feature of their bodies, also the inward complexion frame and full endowments of their minds: But you may in our *Text* behold *man* represented to us perfectly, both inside and outside, both in his soul and body: *Surely every man, in his best estate, is altogether vanity. Selah.*

The parts of  
Text

1. The Subject.

The words are an intire proposition, containing the Subject and Predicate.

The Subject that is *Man*, אָדָם *Adam*; this though it was the proper name of the first man, yet it is frequently used appellatively, In this Subject here is first the note of universality. [*Every*] every man, none excepted; secondly the qualification of this Subject here spoken of, (*viz*) when he is best constituted, when in his prime, when in his greatest beauty and bravery, *Every man in his best Estate*. The word translated here \* *best estate* the Septuagint renders it, ζῶν *vivens*, living, so also the Ethiopick, and Arabick version; and indeed natural life, is one of the choicest, richest, and most pretious Jewel, in all natures treasury and cabinet. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*, Job 2. 4. and saith Solomon, *a living dog is better than a dead Lion*, Eccles. 9. 4. We read of a woman in the Gospel, how that she spent all she had on the Physicians, and what was it for? only to have her health restored, which is a degree below life; but though this translation of the word, doth express somewhat that is very choyce; yet this of *Life* is implied; and all the comforts, conveniences, and accommodations, yea, perfections of life natural, are carried in the Hebrew word: the word properly signifies *Stans*, it cometh from the Hebrew root which signifieth \* *Stetit*; and it is rendered by sundry *constitutus*, as *Piscator*, *Tremelius*, and others: *Tremelius* renders the words

נָצַח from  
נָצַח

## in his best ESTATE.

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words thus, *Profecto omnimoda vanitas omnis homo, quantumvis constitutus maxime*: Surely every man is all manner of vanity, albeit he be never so well settled, and constituted.

The second thing observable is the *Predicate*, or that which is spoken, and affirmed of this *Subject*: and that The Predicate, that he is *vanity*, yea, *altogether* vanity, and that *sure*. cate. ly; all this belongs to the *Predicate*.

He is *vanity*. The Hebrew word here used, was the proper name of the second Son born to *Adam*, whom חבל his Brother *Kain* killed: and the name, or word, properly signifies as translated here in the *Text*, namely *vanity*; wch *Pagnin* describes, to be a most vain, or light thing, such as is a bubble on the water, or the breath Res est qua non est quidpiā, aut qua cito desinit, ut status qui of a mans mouth: The *Syriack* version, render the words thus; *quoniam omnes homines ut vapor consistunt*; the consistency of all men, is no better than that of a vapor: which *Saint James* saith, appeareth for a little Pagnin. while, and then vanisheth away, *Cap. 4. 14.*

He is altogether vanity, *Kol Hebel Kol Adam*; כל-הכל *versa vanitas omnis homo*; all men are all vanity, so it is כל-ארם word for word: the *Septuagint* render it, *ὅτι ὅσα πάντα μάρτυρες, quoad omnia vanitas*; the version of the *Arabick* thus, *quicquid pertinet ad hominem viventem est vanum*; whatsoever belongeth unto living man, is vanity.

*Bithner* he expounds it thus, *Every man is altogether vanity. Hoc est, omni ex parte, ita ut vanitas & miseria qua per alias creaturas frustatim spargitur, in uno homine aggregata videatur: sicq; homo evadit compendium omnium vanitatum qua in creaturis extant, &c.*

\* that is, he is the finck and center of all the vanities in the world; he is as it were the *universe of vanity*. \* Cum inanimis subiecit mutationi, corruptioni; Cum animatis, alterationi, morti; Cum sensibilibus; laetitia, morori; Cum Angelis qui reliquerunt suum domicilium, inconstanti. *Bithner in locum.* \* Universalis vanitas.

Surely

Surely every man in his best estate, is altogether vanity; (*surely*) it is as if he had said, this is most true, most certain, none need to question it.

And as the word *surely* begins the *Text*, so the note (*Selah*) concludes it; which if in any place it be more than a bare *Musical Note*, and pointeth at some extraordinary matter, calling for more than ordinary attention, it may be looked upon as so used here. The matter whereunto it is affixed, being of such unquestionable certainty, of such great importance, and there be such a natural unaptness in every of us, to give Credit to, or take notice of it; so that we had need to be called upon to attend heedfully to it.

Thus we have for brevity sake, given you both the parts of the *Text*, and sense of the *Terms* together, you see that every word in the *Text* hath its weight; the *Text* may be thus *paraphrased*.

Paraphrased.

*Man*, who is the glory of the Creation, Gods masterpiece; and not only this, or the other man, but *every man*; and not every man, at sometime, in some conditions, not man, when dead, or if living, yet in an afflicted estate, or the like, but every man whilst living, yea, when he is in the height, perfection, and accomplishment of all Creature-comforts, when standing on his *tiptoes*, when in his best beauty, and bravery; what is he then? not (saith one) only a mixt creature, a compound of folly and wisdom, weakness and strength, light and darkness, flesh and spirit, beauty and deformity, substance: and vanity. But he is *altogether vanity*, the very sink, and center of all the vanities in the world. If man be a compound creature, it is of all the *vanities* under Heaven; and to this the Holy Ghost sets a double Seal, one at the beginning of the sentence, and another at the end.

Mr. Gase in his  
Sermon  
1 Corin. 1. 29.

*Surely* lets it in, and *Selah* shuts it up. It is a truth of such illimited, and immutable certainty, that it can neither be met, nor overtaken with any objection. *Surely*



ly every man, in his best estate, is altogether vanity.  
Selah.

I proceed now to the Doctrinal conclusions, which we may gather from the words, and we might parcel out the Text into three or four conclusions; as first.

1. That man is a very vain thing, yea, vanity it self.
2. Not only this, or the other man is so, but every man.
3. Every man in his best estate is altogether vanity.
4. How difficultly so ever any are brought to believe this, yet it is a very great truth, and that which is above all objection.

But all these are most pithily, & concisely summ'd up by the Prophet in the words of the Text, which we shall not vary from: so that the point of Doctrine we shall insist upon, you may take it in the very words of the Psalmist.

Surely every man in his best estate is altogether vanity.

Doct.  
Proof.

For the proof of this you may consult these Scriptures, Psalm 144. 3, 4. Lord what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him, &c? and why do David thus reason? in the next words he tells us, man is like to vanity, his dayes are as a shadow that passeth away. Man is like to vanity, in the Hebrew it is Adam is like to Abel, אדם לחבל now Abel, as I told you before, signifies vanity, and it is sometimes put to expresse an Idol, as Jerem. 2. 5. Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your Fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after an Idol? Now the Apostle tells us, that an Idol is nothing in the world; It is the vainest thing in the world, or the greatest vanity: man is become even as one of these; he in his best estate is but a representation of a thing which is not so that upon the point, it is as much as if David had said, Man is nothing. אדם לחבל  
רמה  
החבל \*  
1 Corin. 8. 4.

Another Scripture we have in Psalm 62. 9. Surely men of low degree are vanity; and men of high degree are a lye, to be laid in the ballance they are altogether lighter than vanity; here we read, that what ever degree men

Prov. 19. 6.  
29. 26.

are of, they are no better than vanity; nay, those that are of the highest degree, that is, are highest in riches, honour, parts, or the like, these will the least answer our expectations, and fulfill our hopes; nay, they will prove a lye to us, they will deceive us. Hence David thus exhorteth: *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Son of Man, in whom there is no help, his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish*, Psalm 146. 3, 4. There are many as Solomon saith, who seek the Princes favour, and oh if they can but obtain it, they think they are *made persons*: but what are Princes? are they any other than *Sons of men*? and being Sons of men, what help is there in them? because their breath goeth forth, and they turn again to their earth, and then their thoughts perish, their thoughts, *ad alios benefaciendos*, as *Aben-Exra* expoundeth it, of doing thee and others good, these fall to the ground. To what hath been said, we may add, that God in Scripture, doth not only speak of single persons, that they are *vanity*, but also of *Nations*; and not only of this, or the other Nation, but of *all Nations*: take all mankind in a cluster, or as bundled up together; and not only is this, or that man, this, or that Nation, but all men, and *all Nations, before him, are as nothing, and are counted to him lesse than nothing and vanity*, saith the Prophet *Isaiah*, Cap. 40. 17.

Having thus given you the *Proof* of the *Doctrine*, I shall briefly dispatch these few particulars, namely, shew you first, when it is that man may be said to be in his best estate; or what this best estate of man is: Secondly, that in this estate he is vanity, how, or in what regards he is so: Thirdly, why, or whence he is so; and so make application.

Explication.

To the first, namely, what is meant here by mans best estate: you may take the answer to this first Negatively, then Affirmatively.

Negatively.

Negatively, by *Mans best Estate*, as it is here spoken of,

of, is not meant that estate of *Innocency*, integrity, and perfection, wherein God at the first Created man; that indeed was a right-good, and excellent estate: First, it was an estate of perfect holiness, he being made in Gods Image, and after Gods likeness, *Gen. 3. 27.* Secondly, it was an estate of perfect wisdom, and understanding, of which *Adam* gave Proof, by giving names to all Cattel, to Fowls of the Air, and to the Beasts of the Field, suitable, and apposite to their nature, *Gen. 2. 20.* Thirdly, it was an estate of great honour, and dignity: *David* brings him in with a Crown upon his head, and that Crown is a Crown of glory, and honour; *thou hast Crowned him with glory, and honour, Psalm. 8. 5.* His place was little lower than the Angels, but far above all other Creatures.

1.  
By mans best  
estate here in  
not meant  
mans estate in  
innocency.

Fourthly, it was an estate of great dominion and authority, man being made the Sovereign Lord of the whole Creation, *Gen. 1. 26. Psalm. 8. 6, 7, 8.*

I might instance in sundry other particulars, as

1. The exquisite beauty, and perfection of his outward man, it had nothing (as one observes) of blemish, or blushing, but was clothed with all requisite beauties, and abilities, that might render him lovely, and commend him to every eye.

Dr. Harris his  
Sermon on  
Eccles. 7. 29.

2. The greatness and vastness of his possessions; we need not, saith the same Authour, stand to enlarge upon one parcel of his *dismeans*, namely, that which they call *Paradise*, such the whole both of Sea and Land, and all the Creatures in both were his possession, his *Paradise*.

In brief, mans first estate, was a state of perfect, and compleat happiness, there being nothing within him, but what was desirable, nothing without him, but what was amiable, and nothing about him, but what was serviceable, and comfortable; When therefore it is said, that *Surely every man in his best estate is altogether vanity*, by *best estate* in the *Text*, is not meant mans estate of

of *Innocency*; had man persisted in that, he should not have known what vanity meant; *Adam* in that estate, had in himself a power of perpetuating his estate in *Fee-simple*, upon himself and his for ever.

2. Secondly, by mans *best estate*, is not meant his estate of *Regeneracy*: this is a most excellent estate, and far better than that which is intended in the *Text*. This e-

Colos. 2. 10.

Rom. 8. 17.

Heb 9. 27.

state of regenary, is a spiritual estate, consisting in spiritual graces, and privileges. It is a free estate, freed from all forfeitures, and endowed with choyce immunities. It is a full estate, *we are compleat in Christ*. It is a firm estate, all is everlasting, unmoveable, unfading, we are all Heirs, and joynt Heirs with Christ, if the estate stand good to him, it will to us.

Man in this estate, is not *altogether vanity*. Indeed this estate doth not exempt and privilege from manifold miseries, and afflictions, that abide us in this life, nor doth it exempt from death; for it is appointed unto all men once to dye; the good as well the bad, the regenerate, as well as the unregenerate: notwithstanding man in this estate, is not *altogether vanity*. Indeed the regenerate mans outward comforts, such as are his friends, estate, honour, yea, his person, as it is subject to death, may be said to be *vanity*: but his spiritual estate, this you have heard, is firm, everlasting, and that fadeth not away; whereas one that is no more but a man, but a *meer* child of the first *Adam*, both he and his *best estate* be it whatsoever it may be, is *altogether vanity*.

3. Not his estate of Glory.

Thirdly, by mans *best estate*, as is not meant his estate of *Innocency*, nor his estate of *Regeneracy*: so much less his estate of *Glory*; this is the *best estate* of all. This is better than the estate of *Regenary*; because though in that be the *truth* of grace, yet there is not in it the *perfection* of grace: yea better than *Adams* estate of *Innocency*; because though in that he had perfection of holiness, yet it was loseable, he being (as you know) endowed with freedom of will, either to stand, or to fall, and

and we too too well know, that he did fall; but as to this estate of *Glory*, the holiness, and happiness of it, is both perfect and perpetual, it is sure and cannot fail, hence it is called *an inheritance incorruptible, and undecaying, and that fadeth not away*. Man when exalted to this estate, shall be fully freed from all manner of *vanity*; and we may alter the words and say. *Surely every man in this his best estate, is altogether felicity, or altogether Glory.* 1 Pet. 1. 4.

Thus we have heard, what is not meant by mans best estate, as specified in the *Text*; Now for the *Affirmative*. 2.

By mans best estate, is chiefly, and principally understood his most flourishing, and prosperous estate, as to this world: Now this is threefold. First, there is mans *natural* estate. Secondly, his *moral* estate. Thirdly, his *civil* estate. Mans best estate threefold.

First then every man in his best estate is altogether *vanity*, that is, in his best *natural* estate: by this, I do not understand that estate of sin, wherein every man is born, thus indeed divines frequently, and not improperly, use this phrase of mans *natural* estate: but understand man simply considered, as he is *natures* work-man-ship, as *nature* hath endowed, and enriched him with her gifts, and that either in reference to body or mind: these gifts and endowments of *nature* in reference to body, are health, strength, beauty, and the like: the gifts and endowments of the mind, are strength of memory, quickness of apprehension, good utterance, and all of the like nature, which go under the Notion of a mans natural parts. Now man, yea, every man in his best natural estate is altogether *vanity*: that is, man, even then when he is most strong, most healthful, most beautiful, which is usually in youth, or compleat manhood, then is a person in the flower, and Prime of his life and dayes; even now is he not altogether vanity? *Solomon* tells us, *that Eccles. 11. 10. Child-hood, and youth, are vanity*; there is a double vanity 1.

nity in these, both the vanity of sin, and also the vanity of nature. But more expressly to this, is that of *Job*; *Job. 21. 23, 29.* one dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet, his Breasts are full of Milk, and his Bones are moistened with marrow. One dieth in his full strength, he dieth not only strong, but in robore perfectionis moritur robustus; So the vulgar translation rendereth it; the strong man, dyeth in the strength of his perfection: when his Breasts are full of Milk, and his bones moistened with marrow: *Job* here describeth the exactest state of nature, yet now man dieth, death easily knocks down this strong man: death as *M. Caryl* well glosseth upon the place, doth not stay to take men at an advantage, when they are weakened with age and sickness, as *Simeon* and *Levi* did the *Shechemites*, come upon them, when they were sore, Death can do its work easily, and as speedily in health, as it can in sickness, in strength, as well as in weakness; when we handle the sword, as well as when we lean upon a staff; in the Spring and Summer, as well as in the Fall and Winter of our lives.

*Gen. 34. 25.*

2.  
Mans best moral estate is vanity.

Secondly, as man is vanity in his best natural estate, so also in his best moral estate: that is, take him when his natural parts are brought to the greatest height that Art and diligence can bring them unto: when he is wisest, learnedest, when his heart hath had the greatest experience of Wisdom and Knowledge as *Solomon* Phraseth it. Is he not then even altogether vanity? Is he not equally obnoxious to the stroke of Death? how dyeth the Wise man as the Fool? *Eccles. 2. 16.* As the strongest man cannot resist Death, so the wisest man cannot evade Death: D with one black Theta, soon refuteth all our Wisdom, and putteth at once a period to our reading, and to our natural being. How good therefore is that counsel which the Prophet *Jeremiah* giveth. Let not the Wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; Let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory

*Jer. 9. 23.*

glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth the Lord.

Thirdly, man, yea every man is *vain* in his best Civil Estate. By this I understand man when he hath attained to great riches, to great honour, to great power and authority in the world: First the rich, yea the richest man is altogether vanity. How vain are riches themselves, and all which they, when enjoyed in the greatest plenty and abundance imaginable, do furnish and accommodate us with? you may read what Judgement Solomon after his large experience passeth hereupon.

I got me Servants and Maidens, and had Servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small Cattel, above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the Peculiar treasure of Kings and of the Provinces: I got me men-Singers and women-Singers, &c. then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do, and behold all was vanity, &c.

And as riches themselves are vain, for Solomon elsewhere saith they have wings and fly away: So are the possessors of them: As the rich man cannot by the multitude of his riches by any means redeem the life of his friend and brother from death, so as that he should still live forever, and not see corruption, as the Psalmist speaketh, Psal. 49. 6, 7, 9. So cannot he keep off Death from knocking at his own Door, yea from making a forcible entry upon him, as you may read Luke 12. 20.

Secondly as the richest man, the Honourablest person is also altogether vanity: yea indeed the higher any person is in honour, he is but vanity in a greater degree. Men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie, to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity, Psal. 62. 9. and in Psal. 49. 12.

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man bring in honour abideth not, he is like the beast that perisheth.

2. Man when advanced to the highest power and authority is vanity.  
Mr. Trap.

Thirdly man when arrived at, and invested with, the greatest power and authority, even in this his estate he is altogether vanity: as a Prince, his breath is but in his nostrils, and he is equally if not more subject to Death than the meanest Peasant. The mortal Sybel saith one) is Master of the royal Scepter, and it moweth down the Lillies of the Crown, as well as the grass of the Field. At one end of the Library at Dublin was a Globe, at the other a Skeleton: to shew (saith my Author) that if a man were the Lord of the whole world, yet he must dy, his honour and greatness must be laid in the dust.

Thus we have shewed you what that best estate of man is here spoken of in the Text. It is not understood of mans estate in Innocency; not of his estate in Regency; much less of his estate in Glory: But of mans most flourishing and prosperous estate in the World, namely of his best natural, moral, and civil estate. Thus saith the Prophet Isaiah Cap. 40. 6. All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower in the field. Hebrew Chasdo, the Piety, Excellency, and Eminency of it, that is, all humane and created Excellency in its best beauty and bravery is vanishing.

How man in his best estate is altogether vanity.  
1 Comparatively.  
2. In regard of inconstancy and instability.

These are altogether vanity: first comparatively, namely, when put into the Ballance with God. Behold the Nations are a drop of the Bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the Ballance: all Nations before him are as nothing, they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. Isa. 40. 15, 17. Secondly man in his best estate is altogether vanity, in that he hath no permanency or stabilitie, but is continually subject to change and alteration. That which sets the glory of God highest in opposition to the vanity of the creature is, that with him there is no variableness,

nor shadow of turning; James 1. 17. now in opposition to this point of highest perfection in God, lieth the lowest point of the creatures *vanity*; namely, that in them is nothing but turning. The fashion of this World passeth away saith Paul, it is ever passing, never standeth at a stay; thus is man even when in his best estate: man that is born of a woman is of few dayes and full of trouble, he cometh forth as a flower and is cut down, he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not: I might multiply many other particulars, but I tak it, that these two are here principally meant and intended by *vanitie*, of these the Prophet had been immediately before speaking, in the fourth and former part of the fifth verse of the Psalm.

1 Cor. 7. 31.

Job 14. 1, 2.

The last thing we have to do ere we come ot the Application, is to shew you whence it is that man is such a vain creature, and this I shall dispatch in a word. The Apostle tells us that it is sin that hath subjected the creature to vanity, Rom. 8. 20. and saith the Preacher, Lo this have I found, that God created man upright, but they have sought many inventions, Eccles. 7. 29. The nature of man at the first creation, before the lump was sowed with the leaven of sin, was full of glory and grace: But alas man now, yea every man being become altogether sinful, he thereby is made to be altogether vanity. We shall close with this, Man when he was in the glory of his Innocency subjected himself to sin and iniquitie, and therefore God hath now most righteously subjected all his glory to vanity.

Whence it is that man is such a vain creature.

The brief use we shall make of the Text and Doctrine follows.

Application.

Is man, yea every man in his best estate altogether vanity? Then in the first place let us learn hence not to put our trust or place our confidence in man, no not in any of the children of men, be their outward estate never so flourishing and prosperous in the world, for

1. Instruction.

*Surely every man in his best estate is altogether vanity.* What great means do divers in the world make to wind and inlinate themselves into the favour of such whom we call *great ones*? namely, such who are great in riches, high in honour, and eminent in power and authority? and when they have obtained this, they think they have enough, and to compare this, how will they fawn and flatter, comply with and conform themselves unto the sinfull waies and extravagancies of great men? But consider seriously with your selves what *David* saith here in the *Text*, and then tell me, whether the favour of any man, be he never so great in the world, be *tanti*, of so great worth, as that either to get or keep it, thou shouldst by any wilful sin, incur Gods displeasure? Is it any better than himself, and is not he even *altogether vanity*? yea, are not men of high degree a *Lie*? Cease therefore from man, whose breath is in his *Nostrils*, for wherein is he to be accounted of? *Isa. 2. 22.* most apposite to this, is that of the *psalmist*, which we have cited once already, *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the Son of man, in whom is no help, his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish.*

• *Isa. 146. 3 4.*

2. *Reproof.*

Secondly. Let this serve to give a check to all covetous, or ambitious desires, whereunto *Satan* may either tempt us, or our own evill hearts incline us. Me-thinks this may be a notable Argument to take our hearts off from the world: ask thy self, what is it O my soul, that thou art so eager in pursute after? Is it riches, or honours in the World? admit thou gainest them, what will thy estate be bettered? thou art now but a vain man, and wouldst thou be vainer yet? The man of low degree is vanity, but he that is of high degree is a lie; this the Scripture speaks expressely, notwithstanding all that is spoken of the vanity of all creature-enjoyments, and of mans estate, when possessed with them, yet there

is so much *Sophistry*, and deceivableness in the creature, that men are apt to think, that there is no greater felicity, than to be rich, great, & honourable in the world: hence they indulge covetous, and ambitious desires in their hearts, but to these, let me speak in the words of *David*, *Psal.* 4.2. *O ye Sons of men, how long will ye love vanity, and seek after leasing?* and in the words of *Solomon*, *Prov.* 23.5. *wilt thou set thine eyes,* or as it is in the *Hebrew*, *wilt thou cause thine eyes to fly upon that which is not?* an *Eagle* will not catch flies, much less will she make a flight at nothing, when no game is sprung, and wilt thou make a flight with thy heart, (for the eye which *Solomon* chiefly intends, 'tis the eye of the soul) when nothing springs before thee, but that which is not?

החזק  
עניך.

Thirdly, let this *Text* and *Doctrine* be improved, as an *Antidote* against security: Let none put far from us the evil day. First, let me speak to you that are young men, who are in your *best natural estate*; in the flower of your age, and full of your strength, in the prime, and pride of nature, your breasts are full of Milk, and your bones moistened with marrow, Oh yet know, that even man, yea, every man in his *best natural estate*, is altogether vanity; you have heard what *Job* saith, that one die in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. Consider also, and improve your daily experience: many as likely to live as thou, are gone down into the grave; *Death* (as is well observed by one) doth not observe the *Laws* of nature; but the appointment of God. The *Law* of nature doth indeed set death at the greatest distance, from those that are young, strong, and healthful, and saith to death; go to the wrinkled face, dry bones, dry breasts, medle not with this young man, touch not this fair, and beautiful woman, he or she, is now in the prime of their time and dayes; go to yonder old man, go to that withered woman, let these alone:

3.  
Counsel and  
Exhortation.

*Caryllon Job.*

Oh

Oh but *death* will not receive these commands, *death* will not observe the *Laws of nature*, but the appointment of him, who is the Lord of nature: It is appointed for all men once to dye: and as God hath appointed all to dye, so he appoints the seasons of *death*; and the seasons he appoints are as various as the kinds, occasions, and wayes of *death* are, and therefore *death* knocks as often at the young mans door, as at the door of the old man.

Learn therefore to prepare for *death*, though you have no appearance of *death* upon you; in some we may see many Images, and representations of *death*, dim eyes, palsie hands, trembling knees, stooping backs, in others we can see no sign of *death*, nothing that looks like *death*, but their countenances are fresh, their strength clear, their constitutions healthful, and the like, yet let such remember the words of our Text, that *Surely every man in his best estate is altogether vanity.*

Secondly, let me speak to you, who are rich, honourable, and great men in the world, do you also frequently meditate upon this portion of Scripture, namely, that *man, yea, every man in his best estate, is altogether vanity.* It is requisite thus to exhort you, because in this point, the world is full of such fools as we read of in the Gospel of *Luke*, Cap. 12. 19. who from the greatness of his wealth, concluded the length of his life, saying, *Thou hast goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry,* and saith the Psalmist, speaking of rich men, *Their inward thought is that their houses shall endure for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations; nevertheless man being in honour abideth not, he is like the beast that perisheth, this their way is their folly,* Psal. 49. 11, 12, 13. David himself was overtaken with this folly, when being in prosperity, he said *I shall never be moved,* Psal. 30. 6. Alas God can as easily levell your Mountains, as the poor mans *Mole-hill.*

How

How knowest thou but that God may say to thee as to that rich man in the Gospel, Thou fool this night thy Soul shall be required of thee Albeit you are rich, great, and honorable, yet you are but men, and know it that man, yea every man in his best estate is altogether vanity, yet (as a learned divine of our Nation hath well observed) there is so much seed of pride in the heart of man, and so much heat (as we may so speak) and vigour in the creature to quicken it, as that men are apt to *Deifie* themselves, in the reflexion of their own greatness. I might give you sundry instances of this, both out of sacred and profane History. As that of the *Babylonish Monarchs* recorded *Isai.* 14. 14. and 47. 7, 8. and of the *Prince of Tyrus* recorded *Ezek.* 28. 2. And I have read of *Alexander the great*, that he perswaded himself, that he was the Son of *Jupiter Hammon*; And *Sapores, King* *Rex Regum* of *Persia* wrote himself *King of Kings, Brother to the frater solis & Luna, particeps* *Sun and Moon, and Partner to the Stars: with sundry* *syderum, nec* *Deus est nec* *homo.* others of this nature.

But however you may fancy your selves, know it that were you *Princes*, yet you are but Sons of men, and ye shall dye like men. Let me close this with that excellent admonition of *Scaliger to Cardan*; his words are these; I would ever have thee remember, that thou, and I, and others are but men; and if thou knowest what man is, thou wilt easily understand thy self to be nothing: for my own part, I am wont to say, we are not so much as men, but \* pieces of men; of all which put together something may be made, not great, but of each of them sundred, \* almost less than nothing.

Lastly, to close all, is every man in his best estate altogether vanity? then look out after a better estate than this which *David* calls *man's best estate*. This is but a natural estate: look thou after a spiritual estate: this but a worldly estate, look thou after an heavenly estate: this but that which recommends you

Prov. 8. 18, 19,  
20, 21.

to men, but look thou after that which may recom-  
mend you to God: look out after an estate of favour  
with God through Faith in *Christ Jesus*: this (my be-  
loved) is not *vanity*, but *solid substance*: by thus doing,  
you shall have riches, and honour, yea, durable riches,  
and righteousness: My fruit saith wisdom, is better than  
Gold, yea, than fine Gold; and my revenue than choyce  
Silver: I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst  
of the paths of Judgement, that I may cause those that  
love me to inherit substance, and I will fill their trea-  
sures.




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**FINIS.**

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